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FROM: GENEVA

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TO: Secretary of State

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NO: SECTO 442, JULY 31, 9 P.M.

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SENT DEPARTMENT SECTO 442; REPEATED INFORMATION BONN 47, BERLIN 42.

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SECRETARY SAW VON BRENTANO THIS MORNING AT LATTER'S REQUEST. FOREIGN MINISTER EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AT GENEVA, PARTICULARLY ALLEGED TREND ON PART WESTERN POWERS TOWARDS MAKING ADDITIONAL CONCESSIONS. HE ARGUED THAT BREAK-UP OF CONFERENCE WOULD BE PREFERABLE TO FURTHER CONCESSIONS WHICH WOULD ONLY INCREASE SOVIET APPETITE. COULD NOT SEE HOW IN FACE OF CONTINUING SOVIET INTRANSIGENCE, THERE WAS ANY POSSIBILITY OF AGREEMENT IN LAST FEW DAYS BEFORE DEPARTURE OF SECRETARY.

SECRETARY POINTED OUT THAT WESTERN POSITION WAS NOT WEAK BUT CONTINUINGLY FIRM ON BASIC ISSUES. WEST WOULD STAND FAST ON PRESERVATION OF RIGHTS AND UNACCEPTABILITY OF ALL-GERMAN COMMITTEE. ISSUE OF TROOP LEVELS HAD ACQUIRED PSYCHOLOGICAL AS WELL AS PURELY NUMERICAL ASPECT. WESTERN POWERS AGREED THEY WOULD ONLY DISCUSS THIS IF IT WERE LAST OUTSTANDING ITEM AND THERE WERE COMPENSATORY ADVANTAGES IN REST OF ARRANGEMENTS AGREED. SECRETARY SAID HE CONSIDERED IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY WE WOULD REACH THIS POINT IN DISCUSSIONS OR THAT AGREEMENT COULD BE ATTAINED BY WEDNESDAY. SUCH AGREEMENT WOULD REQUIRE SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN SOVIET POSITION.

SECRETARY NOTED THAT GROMYKO WAS UNDOUBTEDLY CREATING IMPRESSION THAT SOVIETS WERE WILLING CONTINUE NEGOTIATING AND THAT ANY BREAKDOWN OF CONFERENCE WAS DUE TO WESTERN POWERS ACTING UNDER PRESSURE FROM FEDREP. IMPRESSION WOULD BE PARTICULARLY BAD, SECRETARY NOTED, IF THROUGH PESSIMISTIC PRESS ACCOUNTS, SUCH AS HAD BEEN APPEARING DURING LAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS IN:

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-2- SECTO 442, JULY 31, 9 P.M., FROM GENEVA

GERMAN NEWSPAPERS, IMPRESSION WERE CREATED THAT WEST GERMANS WERE APPLYING PRESSURES ON OTHER WESTERN POWERS TO STRENGTHEN DETERMINATION AGAINST MAKING UNACCEPTABLE CONCESSIONS.

VON BRENTANO SAID HE AGREED SUCH IMPRESSION WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE AND INTIMATED HE HAD NOT COME IN EFFORT EXERT PRESSURE ON SECRETARY BUT MERELY TO OBTAIN PRIVATELY BENEFIT OF HIS VIEWS AS WELL AS TO EXPRESS HIS PERSONAL CONCERN OVER DEVELOPMENTS OF LAST FEW DAYS. HE NOTED THAT GROMYKO WAS UNDOUBTEDLY AWARE OF HEAVY PRESSURES FROM PRIME MINISTER UNDER WHICH LLOYD WAS WORKING AND TOOK THIS INTO ACCOUNT IN CALCULATING STRENGTH OF WESTERN POSITION. VON BRENTANO URGED THAT SECRETARY ASSERT HIMSELF MORE CLEARLY AS SPOKESMAN FOR WEST EVEN THOUGH THIS MIGHT MEAN OFFENDING CERTAIN SENSIBILITIES.

AT INITIATIVE VON BRENTANO LUNCHEON HASTILY IMPROVISED FOR TODAY TO GIVE SECRETARY OPPORTUNITY TALK WITH GOVERNING MAYOR BRANDT WHO ARRIVED IN GENEVA YESTERDAY EVENING ON INVITATION GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER.

VILLARD

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